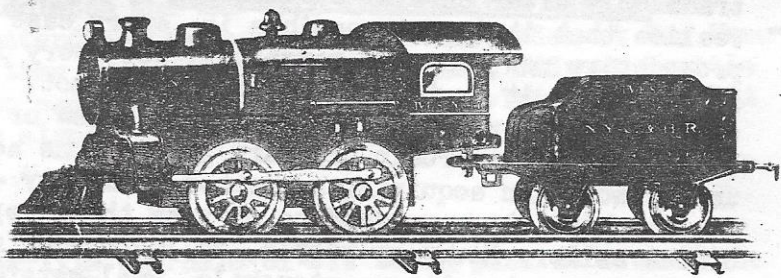


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Bulletin

Southern California Chapter



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Western Division

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Southern Calif Chapter
Train Collectors Assoc

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-President's Report-

A lot has been written and said lately about reproductions and restorations, both pro and con. I would like to quote from a letter I received recently from Ed Demack and as usual, Ed is full of wisdom.

In part, Ed said - "Of the over 2000 items in my collection, only three have been acquired sight unseen. The rest have been acquired by outright purchase or by trade only after careful examination by me. Now I well realize that it is not possible in every case for the prospective new owner to personally see every item before he buys it or trades for it, but if not, then it certainly behooves him, whether he is a new or old collector, to take certain ordinary precautions as he naturally would in acquiring any other commodity - either see and know the merchandise or know the reputation of the seller. How many people, collectors or non-collectors, ever bought an automobile, real-estate, jewelry or anything else without seeing it or without knowing the reputation and integrity of the seller if they bought by mail?"

In another part of his letter, Ed wrote - "Again I emphasize - in a trade or purchase, either know your merchandise and see it or if this is not possible at all, then know your man. After all, half the fun in collecting is acquiring 'Goodies' for either low prices or thru smart trades. Also, I believe it is true that almost all collectors are grown men over 21 years of age and should be able to protect themselves in a deal. I think we will admit that there are unethical people in all kinds of businesses and hobbies such as automobile dealers, real estate men, train collectors, and etc."

In line with this train of thought, I think that if Joe Blow wants to restore a train that is his property, I certainly think he can do so. After all, I don't have to buy it if I don't want to.

Russ

Two of our Western Division members. Clifford Skeen and Gladys Umbarger were united in marriage on September 28, 1962. We congratulate this fine couple and wish them many years of happiness.

Wes Frye acquired two nice catalogs from Roy Lowden, a former employee of Boucher, Inc.. One is a 1922 Boucher and the other a Bassett-Lowke of the same year.

A wonderful three months vacation was enjoyed by Evan Middleton and his wife Frances this past summer. After attending the National TCA Convention at San Francisco, they drove north to the World's Fair at Seattle and then east to the Atlantic coast, visiting many TCA members along the way.

Norville Wehrheim of St. Louis paid us a visit in September. He was in Southern California on a business trip. Norv has one of the finest collections in that area.

The last business meeting of 1962 for the Western Division will be held on November 2nd at 7:30PM at the home of Jim and Zereta Kurten, 619 W. Walnut, Arcadia. Officers for 1963 will be elected at that time so be sure and attend this meeting.

A year before the Stock Market crash of October 1929 which signaled the beginning of the Great Depression of the early Thirties, the Lionel Corporation introduced an entirely new concept in electric train motors. They were called the "Bild-a-Loco" motors, and were manufactured in two sizes - #1 or O gauge and #2 or Standard gauge.

These motors were used extensively in their Standard gauge locomotives until the discontinuance of the line in 1939, but only one O gauge engine could boast of the distinction of having a "Bild-a-Loco" motor and that was the Lionel #4.

The 1928 catalog pictured this little gem in kit or outfit form but for the next four years, the #4 could be purchased either as an individual engine or in a passenger car set.

As far as we know, this locomotive came in only two colors, the more common orange and the slate grey. If any of our readers have or know of another color, we would appreciate hearing from them.

The body used was the St. Paul type and was the same as that on the familiar Lionel #254, the only differences being in the color and the number plates on each side of the cab. The usual Lionel hand reverse switch was also in evidence as well as the latch couplers. The trim on the frame and the frame itself were identical to that of the #254.

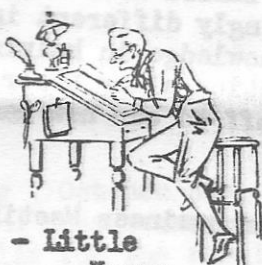
At first glance, the O gauge Bild-a-Loco motor looks just like the O gauge Super Motor, however there is a big difference. The Bild-a-Loco motor is put together with machine screws instead of rivets and the contacts are spring loaded instead of soldered. This allows one to take this motor completely apart for cleaning or repairing without unsoldering wires or drilling out rivets.

The cataloged passenger set afore mentioned was a striking example of Lionel craftsmanship. The loco was orange in color with brass window frames, doors, and name and number plates. The trim was also brass with the exception of the 'eagles' and couplers which were nickled. The big passenger cars of the #605, #605, #606 series were also painted orange with green doors and cream colored window frames and name and number plates. The large steps on these three beautiful passenger cars were made of brass

was the platform on the observation coach. The air tanks were black with nickled ends and the four wheel trucks had copper colored journal boxes. All in all this was a mighty handsome set.

There are surprisingly few of these fine little locos in the hands of the collectors, considering the fact that they were produced over a period of five years. One explanation might be that they were not sold in freight sets, another that they were manufactured when times were hard and the average family could not afford an electric train. Whatever the reason might be for the scarcity of the #4, the fact remains that they are a graceful little engine and very much sought after by train collectors everywhere.

Wes Frye



- Little
Known
Facts -

Boucher was the United States representative for Bassett-Lowke Ltd. in the early 1920's.

Boucher's #1 gauge live steam 'Pacific' and Bassett-Lowke's #1 gauge live steam 'Pacific' were one and the same locomotive in 1922. (Our guess is that Bassett-Lowke made them both)

Marx manufactured a standard gauge train in the middle 1930's.

Lionel had an 0 gauge super motor as well as one in standard gauge.

The 1931 and 1937 American Flyer catalogs used the same picture on their front covers.

The Western Division has been very fortunate lately in attracting into the group, interested and aggressive new members. We are speaking of such people as Al Shadler, Gordon Nesbitt, George Sirus, Art Varney, Ray Nelson, Jerry Brown, and Ralph Schissler. These fellows who have joined our already strong group along with David Gast, Bob Carlson, Howard Davis, Clifford Skeen, Anthony Grgec, Virgil Chritton, Paul Applegate, Tom Trener, Ted Schnack, Bob Ohana, Bob Fruehe, and Fred Claassen have added immeasurably to the strength of our organization.

By looking at the record it is readily apparent as to our strength and unity. We can boast of two past National Presidents, a National Convention, a West Coast Convention, a bi-monthly Bulletin, and an adequate bank account. This cannot be accomplished without effort as well as thought and leadership contained within the local group.

Our newer members loaded with enthusiasm bring along a new and refreshingly different individualism so let us all share our knowledge in helping them attain a representative collection along their interest line.

We take our hats off to our new members!

- September Business Meeting -

Our regular bi-monthly business meeting was held at the home of Dick Wheeler on the evening of September 7, 1962. Twenty five members and guests were present. Two new men, Tom Trener of Torrance and Fred Claassen of Artesia were voted into our fellowship.

The feature attraction of the evening of course, was Dick's outdoor Standard Gauge layout. This miniature railroad is one of the most realistic that we have seen. A lot of thought and hard work has gone into the building of this project.

After the business session a good auction was held with Ed Miller doing the honors. This was followed by refreshments.

Dick and his wife are gracious hosts and it is always a pleasure to visit them at their beautiful home in Monrovia Canyon.

-Who am I?-

I was born September 11, 1921 in St. Gallen, Switzerland and at the age of 2½ years we moved to the good old United States. When I was 6 years old, I was given my first toy train which was an American Flyer #1218 and 3 four wheel passenger cars all in green.

It was not until my own son was 4 years old that I really became interested in toy trains again. At that time I purchased several 0 gauge Lionel sets and began to build a large layout.

One night I met Ralph Pauly at a square dance and he told me about collecting old tinplate. After a visit to his home the collecting bug bit me hard. I joined the TCA and now I am a dyed in the wool train collector. My favorite piece is my #1134 Ives Black Diamond. Who am I?

*-See bottom page 8

- October Social Meeting -

Friday evening , October 5th, about forty Western Division members and guests assembled at Mel Robert's home in Rolling Hills for the regular bi-monthly social get together.

The early part of the evening was spent talking trains and viewing Mel's wonderful array of old Maerklin and other foreign trains as well as his collection of cast iron toys. He had on display his beautiful 1½ inch scale live steam 'Old Timer' that he is planning to use on his outdoor railroad that he is building on the spacious grounds surrounding his new home.

Evan Middleton gave an interesting account of his three month vacation trip to the East Coast and of his visits to train collectors along the way.

A lively auction was held with Russ Hafdahl and Bill Harris presiding, after which refreshments were served

We always enjoy a trip to Mel's. He is a genial host and always ready to help further our very fine hobby.

— Trading Post —

Ralph Pauly would like to get a light green #312 observation car, also a tender to an Ives #1122 loco.

If you have an extra #400E, contact Bill Harris. He would like to buy one. preferably the Blue Comet.

Who has a spare Standard Gauge Bild-a-Loce motor? Wes Frye is in the market for one.

Jim Kurten is anxious to find a set of name plates for an Ives #3255 loco.

Do you have one or two Standard gauge American Flyer 'Bunker Hill' coaches? Gordon Nesbitt would like to buy them if they are for sale.

Al Shadler is short the Club car for his Ives Black Diamond Standard Gauge set,. Can anyone help him?

